



# Cuyahoga County Reentry Review

## SURE HOUSE RE ENTRY PROGRAM

By Aaron L. Phillips and Jennette Chambers

*Aaron L. Phillips was formerly incarcerated; he returned seven years ago. He received supportive services from the faith-based community and turned his life around. This story, however, is not about this man, who is now the senior pastor of the Sure House Baptist Church. It's about what has happened as a result of his commitment to helping other formerly incarcerated individuals in the same manner that he was helped.*

*The Sure House Re-Entry Program, inspired by Rev, Dr. Phillips, is going into its second year of operation. Its vision is to provide custom evidence based support to adult ex-offenders in the State of Ohio. Sure House principally serves ex-offenders in Northeast Ohio who have returned from penal institutions. Sure House has implemented a comprehensive program partnering with local stakeholders, who are currently licensed and credentialed in the State of Ohio for drug treatment and drug screening. Sure House's Program is committed to each client for three years by providing the following: resources for housing through World Healers Inc.; random drug testing and drug assessments; intervention and case management; opportunities for receiving a G.E.D., job readiness, training and placement; and finally peer mentoring and support in reconnecting the formerly incarcerated with families and communities.*

*During the three day a week meetings, clients have group sessions dealing with understanding and developing soft core skills—such as basic rights and common issues that reentrants face. Clients also have one-on-one sessions with mentors to discuss more personal issues.*

*The program is committed to helping those with criminal histories stay on the right path. Participants are required to take random drug tests. Those who test positive are encouraged and assisted to seek treatment—either inpatient or outpatient, depending on the severity of the problem. They may be readmitted to the program, but will have to start over from the beginning. Anyone who tests positive does not receive any job training assistance for a minimum of 30 days and until they pass a drug test.*

*The staff consists of an executive director, three peer mentors, and one job coordinator. The program meets Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Sure House Church located at 11318 Miles in Cleveland, Ohio. Sure House provides a healthy meal during each Session and weekly bus passes for its committed clients. Sure House serves about 100 clients during the course of the year. Approximately 75% of Sure House clients are currently working and have become productive members of our community. Sure House serves both men and women of all ethnic groups and faiths.*

*Terry Anderson of Cleveland, a client of Sure House states, "I was released last summer after serving 15 years in penal institutions. I worked with five temp agencies but was unable to receive full time employment." He met with Deacon Mike Davis, the Job Coordinator for Sure House Re-Entry Program last fall. Anderson joined the program and, as he says, "my life has not been the same. I have learned to be a responsible, productive member of the community." He now has a permanent job as a machinist. Anderson is grateful to Sure House Re-Entry "for being there for me."*

*The Sure House Re-Entry Program operates as a not-for-profit organization. It is privately funded, but is seeking grants and contracts to be able to maintain and expand the program.*

*Sure House Re-Entry Program Executive Director is Rev. Dr. Aaron L. Phillips, the Senior Pastor of the church. You can contact him at (216) 323-4817 or Deacon Michael A. Davis at (216) 441-4211.*



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## North Star: One Year Later By Mary Kelley

A year after its grand opening, the North Star Reentry Resource Center (NRRC) is offering a wide variety of valuable services for the thousands of reentry residents and their families who have visited the Center. North Star Transition Specialist Marcus Bell says that North Star clients are getting help with finding reentry resources and the results are positive.

“Some of these guys are on their third or fourth number. A lot of them have told me that if they’d had a place like North Star a couple of years ago, they probably wouldn’t have gone back to prison,” Mr. Bell said.

New classes, programs and meetings are always being added and the Center’s full calendar can be found at [www.northstarreentry.org](http://www.northstarreentry.org). The latest additions are the New Employment Transitions (NET) Program as well as adult basic literacy education and GED classes. NRRC is also a full-time Ohio Benefits Bank Site. North Star Transition Specialists are trained in helping clients find out about services and resources for which they may qualify.

Mr. Bell said that North Star clients are learning to transform their lives and manage new expectations as they transition back from prison into the community.

“It’s a process and you get out of it what you put into it,” Mr. Bell said. “We help clients get the help they need and have realistic expectations while they work to get their lives back on track.”

Andre Webber is a North Star member and has had a good experience with North Star.

“Instead of spending my time doing something negative, I can take initiative and come here when I need to. I brought my cousin here and have referred a lot of people,” Mr. Webber said. “This is a very productive place with positive role models. The people here care, and they actually help you.”



*Allecia Creighton says Welcome to North Star*

### North Star Neighborhood Reentry Resource Center

Hours:

Monday 9am-5pm

Tuesday 9am-5pm

Wednesday 12pm-8pm

Thursday 9am-5pm

Friday 9am-5pm

1834 East 55th Street  
Cleveland Ohio 44103

**216.881.5440**



*Transition Specialist Marcus Bell*



*Transition Specialist Tracee Turner and North Star Member Andre Webber*



Information is Here at North Star



Transition Specialist Hatidani Mushangazhiki



Transition Specialist  
Travis Johnson

*We want to hear from you...*  
Your comments are important to us.

*Write to us at*

Cuyahoga County  
Office of Reentry  
310 West Lakeside Avenue, Suite 550  
Cleveland, OH 44113

***\*Save the Date\****

## **Employer Awareness Workshop**

Legal Rights and Obligations in Hiring Practices Regarding Job Applicants with Criminal Backgrounds

**May 11, 2011**

**8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Corporate College East  
4400 Richmond Road  
Warrensville Hts., OH

This free workshop is designed for attorneys, human resources professionals and employers and will provide valuable information on how to avoid legal liability and on benefits available to those who hire formerly incarcerated individuals. Many issues will be addressed including background checks, negligent hiring and supervision and free bonding and tax incentives.

Registration is required – the workshop is filling up!

For more information, send an email to [cperkins@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:cperkins@cuyahogacounty.us)

## **Events Reminder:**

**May 3, 2011 Center for Families and Children Annual Meeting at Windows on the River**

**May 4, 2011 Recovery Resources Annual Meeting at Windows on the River**

**June 2, 2011 Community Assessment & Treatment Services(CATS) Annual Meeting at the CATS Outdoor Pavillion**

## Recovery Resources – Social Enterprises

1242 East 49th Street

Open House and Tour of the Frameworks, Packaging and Maintenance Divisions

**Tuesday May 10, 2011 and Thursday May 19, 2011**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Recovery Resources – Social Enterprises assists Cuyahoga County residents with barriers to employment due to substance abuse and/or mental illness, including those returning to the community from incarceration.

The tour will showcase how Spectrum Enterprises packages hand soaps and other products as well as demonstrate the award-winning artwork framing business.

Contact Wil Cheeks at 216-761-2388 for more information.

## The Citizen Circles Concept



Citizen participation and guidance is essential for correctional practices inside and outside institutions. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has embraced

the needs related to offenders returning

home from correctional settings and as such one strategy is the implementation of Citizen Circles. i Circle members address risks that contribute to criminal activity by taking ownership of the solution. It is an opportunity for citizens to communicate expectations for successful reentry and help offenders recognize the harm their behavior has caused others. Offenders are able to make amends and demonstrate their value and potential to the community.

## Citizen Circles Locations

### *The Euclid Avenue Citizen Circle*

216.421.0482 ext. 282

### **CEOGC**

### *North Star Resource Center*

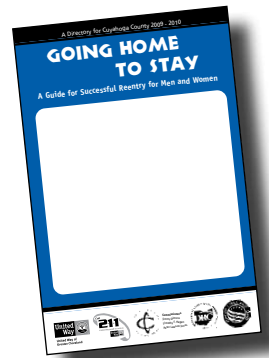
216.751.1382

### *Mt. Pleasant*

216.751.1085

To receive a copy of **Going Home to Stay**

contact First Call for Help at 216.436.2000 or go online and download a copy at [www.211cleveland.org/pdfs/communityreentry.pdf](http://www.211cleveland.org/pdfs/communityreentry.pdf)



### COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS:

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phone: 216.698.2501